

# Reflective writing

## Reflection

Reflection has developed to become a central concept in educational theory and learning in the health and social care professions (Clark, 2009). Midwifery is a challenging field and every day we come across new or thought-provoking situations that might be exciting or difficult to cope with. This showcases the need for increasing self-awareness, understanding of safe and empathetic practice and having an insight. When you're working outside of your comfort zone, while trying to take in new information and giving quality care to an array of women, there isn't a lot of time to think about why you're doing what you're doing. And that is where reflection comes to help your development. Reflection involves looking at a past situation, assessing what you have learnt from it, what you could have done differently, realising new approaches to your care and ultimately, how you felt about the whole experience. There are various definitions of reflective writing and thinking (Collington, 2006).

Boxall, N <https://www.rcm.org.uk/content/reflecting-on-reflections> accessed on 21/01/2017

## Reflective writing is commonly used:

- as part of a follow up after a clinical event (i.e. an unexpected clinical outcome where the Risk Management or Supervisor of Midwifery (SOM) team will require from you to reflect and critically develop a certain theme that will help your learning and professional behavior
- as part of an academic or other CPD module. The learning outcomes are set by the module leader and you will be requested to write a reflective essay based on an experience of yours.
- Reflections are the basis for the Mentorship Module and the Sign off Mentor component (add HBMA link for mentorship).
- Undergrad midwifery students and newly qualified (preceptor) midwives are encouraged to write mini reflections to enhance their learning and self-awareness.
- Reflections are prerequisite for the Revalidation process (add HBMA link; <http://revalidation.nmc.org.uk/download-resources/forms-and-templates>).

Overall, reflective writing is a great tool for any midwife no matter how experienced or senior.

## Reflective models

There are three common models to follow: Van Manen (1977), Gibbs (1988), Durgahee (1996), Johns (2006), Driscoll (by Borton) (2007). The most commonly used model is the Gibbs model. It

involves thinking systematically about the phases of an activity, using headings including: description, feelings, evaluation, analysis, conclusion and action plan.

The following online tool is great resource about Reflection, its attributes and frameworks.

[http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/nmp/sonet/rlos/placs/critical\\_reflection/](http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/nmp/sonet/rlos/placs/critical_reflection/)

#### References:

Clark, P. (2009) Reflecting on reflection in interprofessional education: Implications for theory and practice. **Journal of Interprofessional Care** 23(3), p. 213-23

Collington, V. (2006) Reflection in midwifery education and practice: an exploratory analysis, **Evidence Based Midwifery**, 4(3), p. 76-82 <https://www.rcm.org.uk/learning-and-career/learning-and-research/ebm-articles/reflection-in-midwifery-education-and>

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